



# MEETING SUMMARY

**Date:** October 10, 2002

**Topics:**

- Status of Natural Resources Restoration Projects
- Status of the Site Stewardship Plan
- Records Feasibility Study Draft Report

**Attendees:**

**Fernald Citizens Advisory Board**

Marvin Clawson

Pam Dunn

Steve DePoe

**FRESH**

Carol Schroer

**The Perspectives Group**

Doug Sarno

David Bidwell

**U.S. Department of Energy**

Ed Skintik

Gary Stegner

**U.S. Department of Environmental Protection**

Gene Jablonoski

**Ohio Environmental Protection Agency**

Donna Bohannon

Tom Schneider

**Fluor Fernald**

Rick Strobl

Sue Walpole

Pete Yerace

**Others**

Maurice Hornback

Jim Innis

Keith Wilkinson

## **Status of Natural Resources Restoration Projects**

Doug Sarno opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. Pete Yerace reviewed the major natural resources restoration projects underway at the site.

Pete reported that activities in the Southern waste units area include grading and tree planting. The flood plain has been extended to offer more protection to Paddy's run. The area is very sandy, so rock and matting were laid to stabilize the soil. Because it was such a dry summer, the trees were watered to maintain an acceptable survival rate. The site aims for eighty percent survival for trees and will replant as needed to reach that rate. For natural resources restoration, the site is following an adaptive management strategy, which allows approaches to be adjusted depending on the success or failure of past efforts. More planting will occur in the spring.

In the Northern areas, the pine tree groves were thinned and will be replanted with deciduous (hardwood) trees. Some vernal pools and other wetland areas will be created in this area. Pete explained that the site may try planting some herbaceous plants in this area, in an attempt to attract deer away from browsing on the woody plantings.

Pete reported that restoration projects will be undertaken in the borrow area during the next fiscal year. Projects for that area are currently being planned.

Tom Schneider stated that the reinterment of Native American remains will occur in areas that have already been restored to prairie habitats.

Pete reported that all cows will be removed from the Fernald site by the end of October. Funding for restoration of these pasture areas is limited at this time, but workers at the site will begin removing fescue, so that the site is better suited for native grasses when funds are available for seeding this area.

Pete added that maintenance of the prairie restorations will need to be discussed soon. Controlled burns are the best way to maintain a prairie, but the public would have to be comfortable with this approach before it was used. He stated that if controlled burns were used at the Fernald site, they would not be used on the OSDF. Pete explained that the area would be burned in small patches. Doug suggested providing the group with a video of a prairie burn.

Pete explained that DOE counsel is working on language for the Natural Resources Damages settlement. The draft settlement will be sent to DOE Headquarters for review. Pete stated that there are still some issues to be resolved with the other Trustees. Pete stated that the current approach to the settlement would include broad guidelines for how settlement awards could be spent. Doug asked if the FCAB should submit a letter of support for using NRD settlement fund for public education at the site. Pete stated that the Trustees are acting on behalf of the public, so it would be good to have public support. He suggested writing a letter to Steve McCracken, which he could keep on file and submit to DOE Headquarters with the settlement. Jim Innis asked if the settlement would provide for ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the restoration. Tom Schneider indicated that there are still differences of opinion among the Trustees regarding that issue.

## **Status of the Site Stewardship Plan**

Doug announced that DOE Headquarters has asked Fernald and the other closure sites to submit stewardship plans by the end of January 2003 and issued a guidance document that outlines the contents expected in these plans. He asked that committee members review the DOE guidance over the next month. The November Stewardship Committee meeting will focus on the draft Fernald plan.

Gary Stegner distributed a table of contents for the Fernald plan, based on the DOE guidance. He stated that the draft to be reviewed by the Stewardship Committee in November will include cost estimates for stewardship and officially identify the DOE Grand Junction Office as the steward of the Fernald site. The plan submitted to DOE in January will be a living document, which will be revised as the site moves forward with stewardship planning. There is no public comment period planned for this document, but it will be placed on the Fernald web site for public review.

Gary explained that the role of the Grand Junction Office has not been defined, but DOE Headquarters has indicated that Grand Junction will assume stewardship responsibilities at Fernald. Gary recommended inviting a representative from the Grand Junction Office to the next Stewardship Committee meeting. The Stewardship Committee agreed that this was a good idea and asked Gary to extend the invitation.

The committee briefly discussed CERCLA requirements for long-term public communication and stewardship. Doug suggested that the next Future of Fernald workshop should focus on long-term stewardship and planning for closure.

Gary reported that Anne Wickham attended an EM51 Long-term Stewardship Core Working Group meeting. The committee members expressed interest in having Anne report about this at a future Stewardship Committee meeting.

The group also briefly reviewed a DOE framework for the transition of closure sites to long-term stewardship. Doug stated that the framework addresses many of the needs that have been identified in the past by the Stewardship Committee. Key points include having stewardship systems in place before site closure and facilitating public access to information. Doug also noted that the document supports the use of museums and interpretive centers to provide information to the public. Pam Dunn noted that the framework discussed the use of public oversight boards during stewardship. Doug suggested that the FCAB submit a letter of support for the DOE site transition framework.

## **Records Feasibility Study Draft Report**

Doug provided an overview of the draft report for post-closure public access to site records. He explained that the report coins a term, Community-Based Stewardship, which describes the critical role the public will play in long-term stewardship at Fernald. The report asserts that for Community-Based Stewardship to succeed, the public must have access to information. The report discusses what information the public needs, how that information should be provided, and how information is currently being managed at the site. Doug noted that the report also states that the Fernald community has identified a multi-use education facility as its preferred means to provide information to the public.

The Stewardship Committee briefly discussed the need to bring groups together to build interest in and support for constructing an education facility at the site. Doug explained that the FCAB is unable to raise funds for the facility, so a new organization may be necessary to take responsibility for building support for the facility. Doug stated that the community needs to pursue this project quickly, because the site's scheduled 2006 closure date is rapidly approaching.

Jim Innis noted that the local historical society is interested in the facility, because it could provide storage space for its collections and provide an opportunity to communicate with the public. Committee members also suggested that local school districts might be interested in partnering on an education facility.

Gene Jablonowski stated that the report should recommend a Record of Decision for stewardship activities. Tom Schneider suggested including language from the Federal Facilities Agreement that requires a site-wide Record of Decision for Operable Unit 6.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.